**EVERGLADE KITE**

**NEWSLETTER OF THE AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE EVERGLADES**

Serving Palm Beach County, Florida

Volume 55, Number 5

February 2015

---

**CALENDAR**

For trip info email: asetripinfo@gmail.com

Feb 1 Sun. 6:30 am Belle Glade, meet in the parking lot near the Costco Gas station near 11001 Southern Blvd/Lamstein Lane (Chuck Weber)

Feb 5 Thur. All Day Trip, TM Goodwin/Broadmoor, contact Rick Schofield asesarcho@rschofield.net

Feb 7 Sat. 7:45 am, STA 1E, ASE welcomes Tropical Audubon. Contact Linda 561-742-7791 or asetripinfo@gmail.com to register

Feb 8 Sun. 8 am Riverbend Park, Jupiter, 9060 Indiantown Rd, meet at south end of main parking lot near canoe rental trailer (Ed Kawecki)

Feb 9 Mon. 8 am West Delray Regional Park Delray Beach, 10875 W. Atlantic Ave (Sue Young)


Feb 13 Fri. 8 am GBBC* Wakodahatchee Wetlands, Delray Beach, 13206 Jog Road. Meet at top of boardwalk (Paton White)

Feb 14 Sat. 8:00 am to 4:00 pm 16th Annual EVERGLADES DAY FESTIVAL, “Romance of the Everglades” ARM Loxahatchee NWR, Free

Feb 14 Sat. 8am GBBC* Green Cay Wetlands, Boynton Beach, 12800 Hagen Ranch Road. Meet outside Nature Center main door (Valeri Brauer)

Feb 15 Sun. 7am GBBC* STA 1E. Contact Linda 561-742-7791 or asetripinfo@gmail.com to register

Feb 16 Mon. 8:00 am GBBC* Snook Island Natural Area BIRDS & BREAKFAST, Lake Worth. Meet at boardwalk by north side of Lake Worth Bridge (Linda Humphries)

Feb 21 Sat. 8 am STA-1West. SPECIAL TRIP (SFWMD’s Brian Garrett) Contact Linda 561-742-7791 or asetripinfo@gamil.com to register

Feb 22 Sun. 8 am, Winding Waters, West Palm Beach, 5501 Dyer Road. Meet at entrance off Haverhill to Dyer Park (Claudine Laabs)

Feb 27, 7:30 am. Okeeheelee Nature Center, CANCELLED by Nature Center

Feb 28 Sat. 8:30 am STA 5, Contact Linda 561-742-7791 or asetripinfo@gmail.com to register

---

**Monthly MEETING and LECTURE February 3**

“Boca Raton Sea Turtle Conservation”

David Anderson, Marine Turtle Specialist, Gumbo Limbo Nature Center

Join us Tuesday, February 3 at 7:00 p.m. (earlier meeting time this year) as David Anderson speaks to us about the Boca Raton Sea Turtle Conservation program.

As a team specialist on Kurt Ruesenko’s Sea Turtle Conservation and Research program, David conducts sea turtle nesting beach surveys; gives presentations about sea turtle biology and habitat conservation; and responds to sea turtle stranding events.

Join us for this entertaining and educational program in rooms 101 and 102 at FAU Pine Jog Environmental Education Center, 6301 Summit Blvd, (near Jog Road) in West Palm Beach. Refreshments at 6:30 pm. Meeting is free and open to the public.

---

**PANAMA BIRDING TRIP**

Call Claudine Laabs at 561-655-9779 to join the March 4–11 Panama trip. Best rainforest birding in the world!

---

**Everglades Day Festival Saturday Feb 14**

*Romance of the Everglades*

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Friends of the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge, Loxahatchee Everglades Tours and Audubon Society of the Everglades invite you to enjoy our 16th Annual Everglades Day Festival, held at the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee NWR located on US 441/SR 7 south of Boynton Beach Blvd, rain or shine Saturday, February 14, from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

This festival focuses attention on the importance of America’s Everglades to South Florida’s people, animals, and habitats. It also provides education, entertainment, and direct experiences. This year’s theme is the Romance of the Everglades focusing on the visitor’s fascination with the Everglades and its ecosystem.

This year’s themed T-shirt features an amazing photograph by ASE’s own Claudine Laabs – the white egrets actually form a “heart” with their necks. This shirt will be for sale for $13.00 in our February 3 Meeting as well as at the Refuge Gift Shop.

Special features this year will include:

- Rey Becerra and his black Stallion representing the Seminole Tribe
- Ron Magill of Zoo Miami with a program called Alligator Love
- Edward Mercer, Python Hunter with live specimens caught in the Everglades
- Roger Hammer, speaking on Romantic Wildflowers photos & book signing
- Pete McCarty, romance mystery author of Everglades & book signing
- Back by popular demand, the Palm Beach County Plein Air painters who will paint and hold a showing and awards ceremony of works done live there.

Not to speak of live music; animals from Busch Wildlife and the Palm Beach Zoo; food trucks; kids’ fishing, archery and fun activities; canoeing, guided nature walks – and all the activities that have made this Festival a must-visit event. Except for food trucks, the day is free with ample parking and shuttle busses to the Refuge.

So bring yourself, kids and grand-kids, friends, neighbors and students—and participate in the Romance of the Everglades!

Any questions, call Susan Snyder 561-627-7829 or Serena Rinker 561-735-6029.
At our January meeting I was thrilled to see so many raised hands when I asked how many people had renewed or have new chapter-only memberships. If you have not yet renewed, please do! We count on your support.

And speaking of support, at the Board of County Commissioners’ meeting on January 8 we had twenty, yes twenty! members attend. Several things are really apparent. First, we have issues about certain parcels of land that are labeled preservation parcels but are really landscape buffers and one is a road easement for the future extension of Flavor Pict Road. Second, that the farmers really do have a hard time and need support. Also, that the ARM Loxahatchee Wildlife Refuge is impacted by increase in development and storm water runoff. And finally, that I need to be visiting each commissioner with an ASE member from his/her district several times a year. I am looking forward to the next round table meeting. I particularly want to meet with Commissioner Berger, as the round table was her idea and yet Commissioner Valeche said that he felt no meaningful changes would occur from them. That seems like a huge waste of our money and time, because PBC staff have been working diligently, as have dozens of citizens.

“America's Everglades.” It was hard to say at the BCC meeting but I did and I know it will be easier the next time. This is all about rebranding: say it often enough and it becomes how people think of it. We think of the Grand Canyon not as Arizona’s but as part of our national heritage. The Everglades National Park is one of our largest national parks and is both a Ramsar (Wetland of International Significance) and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is critical to the funding of the Everglades restoration that it is considered a national treasure, not Florida’s problem. As South Floridians, we need to be the messengers—so say and write America’s Everglades, and do your part to help restore them.

**GBBC—Great Backyard Bird Count**

The 18th annual GBBC will be held Friday, February 13, through Monday, February 16. The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is the yearly four-day event that asks bird watchers of all ages to count birds to create a world-wide snapshot of bird populations. Participants count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the event and report their sightings online at www.birdcount.org. The citizen science data that the GBBC collects gives researchers information about the location and size of bird populations so they can learn more about how birds are doing, and how to protect them and the environment we share.

It's free, fun, and easy. Do it in your own back yard and also join our GBBC birding trips. There's one on each of the GBBC days—Paton White on Friday at Wakodahatchee Wetlands, Valleri Brauer on Saturday at Green Cay Wetlands, and Linda Humphries on Sunday at STA 1E and Monday at Snook Island “Birds & Breakfast”. Join the fun and this important citizen science project!

**Green Schools Recognition Program: JUDGES NEEDED**

Help us score GREEN SCHOOLS applications. You will find the project very interesting. This is a competition open to all public and private schools in Palm Beach and Martin County. Cash prizes are given. ASE was a member of the original planning team 8 years ago. Pine Jog Environmental Education Staff holds a luncheon training session Jan. 27, scoring is due 3/30 and award luncheon is May 13. Each judge receives three electronic applications to score. For more details contact Karen Aubry (kaubry@fau.edu), Susan roysue@bellsouth.net or call Pine Jog at 686-6600. http://www.ourgreenschools.com/

---

**PAPER COPY OF THE KITE**

ASE has converted our Kite subscription list from paper delivery to electronic delivery (email) because of the monthly expense. If you are a CHAPTER MEMBER OF ASE you are receiving your copy in the form (email or paper) as you requested and do not need to contact us. If you are a NATIONAL MEMBER and want to continue to get your Kite (email or paper) and have not already contacted us, you must contact Gail Tomei (561-969-7567/blackgrouper@comcast.net). You will always be able to read the Kite on our website, www.auduboneverglades.org

**ARE YOU A NEW MEMBER OF NATIONAL AUDUBON?**

We are delighted to have you as a member of the Audubon Society of the Everglades as well. We hope you will join us at our meetings and trips. If you wish to continue to get the Kite, please contact Gail Tomei and let her know if you prefer to receive your Kite by mail or by email. Gail Tomei (561-969-7567/blackgrouper@comcast.net)
Bird of the Month Photos

Please send March Bird-of-the Month Everglades Red-shouldered Hawk pictures (jpg format) to be posted on the AudubonEverglades.org web site to SheilaElliot@yahoo.com. Identify the name for credit, and if there is anything specific to look for in your picture (like banded, in molt, etc) feel free to add a few words for the caption. Meanwhile please enjoy our growing on-line gallery of member pictures on the web site (click Bird of the Month on left side scroll-down topic list).

Now and then people ask me why the ASE newsletter is called the Everglade Kite. After all, the Everglades are plural, and the bird is called Snail Kite. But both true. But did you know that the federally endangered Snail Kite that we now recognize as a disjunct population of the same species that occurs in South America used to be known as the Everglade Kite? In fact, if you read the species account in A. C. Bent’s 1937 *Life Histories of North American Birds of Prey, Pt I*, you’ll be surprised at how much—or perhaps how little—has changed:

The Tamiami Trail runs due west from Miami for 35 miles straight through the southern half of the Everglades. For most of this distance one sees only a broad expanse of marsh, mainly covered with long grasses as far as one can see, but dotted here and there with little clumps of trees or bushes, with an occasional island of larger trees and bushes, amphibian willow, alligator apple, waxmyrtle, swamp bay, silver-leaved magnolia, and cocoa plum. Toward the western border the grassy glades are dotted with very small isolated sypresses, 8 to 10 feet high, so scattered that the broad view is not obstructed. Further west the cypress becomes thicker and taller, often forming dense cypress clumps. [...] This was the former home of the everglade kite, and it was here that we saw a lone individual in March 1930. [...] When I first visited southern Florida, in 1904, everglade kites were breeding commonly all through the southern Everglades, west of Palm Beach and back of Miami and Homestead; there was even said to be a breeding colony of them near Paradise Key, now Royal Palm State Park. But the draining of the Everglades has changed all this; most of their former haunts are so dry, except during especially wet seasons, that the great marsh snails, their principal food, have died...

Bent goes on like this for another couple of pages before turning to the species description of this most Floridian of raptors: “The female is somewhat larger than the male; her general color is ‘mummy brown’ or ‘bister;’ instead of bluish slate-color, mixed with whitish or pale buff below [like the male].”

With water levels in today’s Everglades being “managed,” they are constantly changing, meaning that there’s usually somewhere with enough (but not too much) water so these birds can nest and raise their young; the difficulty lies in knowing just where those places are. Come to ASE’s Feb. meeting to learn more!
ATTENTION: This could be your last issue of the Kite! See inside for details.

The Everglade Kite is published 10 times a year by Audubon Society of the Everglades, P.O. Box 16914, West Palm Beach, Florida, 33416-6914. Also available on the web: www.auduboneverglades.org. AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE EVERGLADES is a 501 c-3 organization #59-6019854. We gratefully accept any donations or bequests. http://www.auduboneverglades.org/donate/

Articles NEEDED! Send to auduboneverglades@gmail.com before the 10th of the month.